



# ANC 4<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL POLICY CONFERENCE



## GENDER COMMISSION REPORT

## PREAMBLE

- We located the gender discussion in the context of the NDR and the strategy and tactics document. \*
- Issues of inequalities should be raised on the evolution of society with the acquisition of property, that's when women were taken as a commodity, this was reinforced by the industrial revolution, and capitalist ideology.
- We traced the gender equality agenda from women's struggles for land, the pass laws and social injustices in a discriminatory unequal society. (apartheid)
- All these struggles are captured in the Women's Charter.
- The gender agenda should not be perceived as an "act of charity" or good will, as it is a strategic objective of the ANC of non-sexism.

## CONTEXT

- We are in the centenary, celebrating the 12 presidents of the ANC, the mere fact that they were all men, indicates the struggles faced by women. It took 35 years before women were accepted as full members of the ANC, it took us again 95 years to achieve 50 – 50 representation. In the years of the struggle before 1994 there was a practice within the liberation movement to prioritize racial liberation rather than prioritising women, despite women's own plight they were actively involved in the liberation struggles. In 1997 women demonstrated their dissatisfaction in the strategy and tactics document not being engendered. We have equal rights written in the constitution protecting women, but women continue to be burdened by the triple challenge of unemployment, poverty and inequality.
- In Polokwane we made progress with the establishment of a Women's Ministry.
- Since their fight against the land laws, the pass laws and many other oppressive laws, women continue to be the engine of mobilisation in the NDR.

## WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

- We need to examine the economic environment and ensure that the mainstreaming of women in the economy across all sectors is accelerated through developing measures that will increase their access to finance, employment, and assets.
- A review of all the business and industrial codes, including the BBBEE act to ensure that women are prioritised, because they are significantly the largest group carrying the biggest economic burden.
- Women in co-ops must be capacitated with business, financial and management skills.

## WOMEN'S ACCESS TO DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

- Women still do not have access to development finance, even where government has allocated a budget, its conditions make it inaccessible for women who need it most, the poorest of the poor.
- In other countries such as India micro banking facilities have been developed such as the Grammin bank, and the experience of Kenyan women where they can access loans of as little as the equivalent of R100.

## WOMEN AND LAND

- Ownership of land by women needs to be accelerated, we need increased access to land for women, to address poverty. Land also provides collateral for women in the form of an asset so that they can access economic empowerment and enter the economic mainstream.
- Land restitution and relevant resources have not worked for women, therefore all the impediments that have led to this should be reviewed and removed to expedite land access to all women especially those who work the land.

## SEX WORK AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- The current skewed economy has created an environment that has influenced the growth in sex work and human trafficking. Including human trafficking from rural to urban areas as well as across the continent.
- The sexual offenses act should be reviewed, and more public hearings held with people in this sector, actively participating, as the current laws do not assist sex workers in rehabilitation and further expose them to exploitation.

## TRADITIONAL LEGISLATION

- While we acknowledge the traditional courts bill currently in Parliament, nevertheless we would like to recommend more public hearings be held so as to align it with the constitution and the criminal procedures act.

## GENDER STRUCTURES

- While the establishment of the Women's Ministry is a step forward, its impact must be regularly monitored and reported on.

## WOMEN AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

- The Justice system requires radical transformation with regards to gender.
- Currently officials of the courts are not sensitive to gender related offenses, for eg. Issues of abuse including rape do not get handled in a satisfactory manner during prosecution and sentencing. Rapists are often given bail and released into society, and inadequate sentences are handed down to perpetrators of rape and abuse.
- The undue length of time taken to resolve cases victimises the victim a second time. These cases should be prioritised, lengthy and frequent postponements should be avoided.
- Increasing the number of appropriately trained court officials such as prosecutors trained to deal with sexual related offenses.

## OLD AGE PENSION

- The means test with regards to old age pensioners should be scrapped.

## GENDER PARITY

- 50-50 gender representation across public and private sectors must be legislated appropriately.
- At all levels within the ANC structures, including delegations to conference, the 50-50 policy should be implemented.
- For women to make an impact, we should ensure our organisations and institutions be transformation and a working environment conducive to women's multi-faceted role in society must be created.

## SOCIALISATION OF CHILDREN

- Boys and girls should be socialized in a non-sexist manner. This concept should be built into our school curriculum, from grade R. This should work to eradicate patriarchy and the perception that males are superior to females.

## EDUCATION

- The commission is calling for innovative strategies to eradicate illiteracy amongst women.
- More girls should be encouraged to develop maths, sciences and technology related skills, starting at early childhood development.
- Women need to be encouraged to get into critical skills, such as Engineering and medicine.
- The number of no-fee schools needs to be increased.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Mobile police stations should be established at all informal settlements and rural areas.
- The number of Thuthuzela centers must be increased, especially in rural areas.

- Suitably qualified people should be attached to all police stations to deal with rape and abuse.
- Victims should be given a choice on who should attend to them

## HEALTH

- All medical aids should provide comprehensive reproductive health services, including contraception.
- All government clinics should provide the morning after pill as an alternative.
- The free distribution of sanitary towels needs to be accelerated. (the dignity campaign.)
- Mobile clinics should be provided in all rural areas and informal settlements.
- Accelerate the achievement of MDG targets.

## IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

- The establishment of an agency to incubate women owned co-operatives and SMME's on production management, training and business management for sustainability.
- The establishment of an academy that is going to develop women and equip them with employment and life skills, for all vulnerable women. With the objective to ensure they participate actively in the economy. This will include rehabilitated sex workers and victims of human trafficking and abuse.
- Rural women working the land should be capacitated effectively to become commercial farmers.

## PROPOSALS

- The commission proposed a far reaching gender summit before Mangaung to further enhance the discussion document.
- We affirmed the planned consultative summit being prepared by the ANCWL and the Alliance women, but called for an expansion beyond women and broaden it to address gender in general.

## CONCLUSION

- To achieve the vision and reality of a non-sexist society will require not only appropriate legislation but also a radical transformation of people's mindsets.
- Relegating non-sexism to a specific sector will not transform society; it needs the whole organisation, every man and women of the ANC and society in general to commit themselves actively to a non-sexist society.